THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. The exemption has been granted keeping in view the protocol requirement and threat perception.

(b) The list of the dignitaries exempted from pre-embarkation security checks is reviewed from time to time. Union Ministers of Cabinet rank are exempted from pre-embarkation security checks. There is no proposal, at present, to exempt the MPs from these checks.

Restoration of Air Service between Delhi and Ludhiana

1605. SARDAR GURCHARAN SINGH TOHRA:
SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Vayudoot used to operate flights between Delhi and Ludhiana from Sahnewal airport and the route was economical;

(b) whether after the merger of Vayudoot with Indian Airlines, the Indian Airlines have failed to restore the air services between Delhi and Ludhiana;

(c) whether any survey has been done to restore the services on this route recently; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Vayudoot had earlier operated services on Delhi-Ludhiana-Delhi sectors with HS-748 aircraft and earned marginal profits.

(b) Commercial considerations and operational constraints at present do not permit operation of Indian Airlines services to/from Ludhiana.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The survey revealed that oepration of air services by Indian Airlines to/from Ludhiana will not be economically viable with the smaller type of aircarft available in the fleet.

Impact of BA's Additional Services on AI

1606. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that British Airways is planning eight additional flights to India including direct flights from London to Bangalore and Hyderabad; and

(b) if so, what will be its impact on Air India?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) No, Sir. British Airways, the designated airline of UK is not presently entitled to oeprate either to Bangalore or to Hyderabad.

(b) Does not arise.

Shifting of Patna Airport

†1607. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated a plan for the shifting of Patna Airport to some other place after the accident near Patna Airport this year;

(b) if so, by when the new Airport is proposed to come in operation after shifting the same; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In case of many old airports, residential areas have developed nearby over a long period. However necessary rules relating to height restriction etc. are enforced in giving 'No objection' to such development so that safety of civil aviation operations is ensured. As such, there is no danger to civil aviation operations in such airports. Therefore, there is no plan to shift such existing airports to far away places.

Upgradation of Srinagar Airport

1608. MIRZA ABDUL RASHID: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken action for the long pending upgradation of Srinagar Airport; and

(b) if so, whether any time frame has been set and whether the decision of Government to upgrade the said Airport as International airport is still valid?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.